



LAND, WATER, AND FACILITIES RESTORATION

"The Nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value."

President Theodore Roosevelt

National parks, refuges, and public lands are the heart of the Nation's natural, cultural, and historical legacy. As custodians of these resources, the Department faces growing demands to invest more to rehabilitate an aging infrastructure of public facilities and protect natural and cultural resources. The 1999 budget proposes to better focus construction and maintenance funding through rigorous screening of top priorities and improved management as well as a broad initiative to invest in land acquisition.

SAFE VISITS TO PUBLIC LANDS

The Department manages an extensive infrastructure complex to meet the needs of some 379 million annual visitors who visit and enjoy the national parks, national wildlife refuges, and the public lands. Land and buildings; dams and water control structures; vehicles, equipment and aircraft; and other plant and equipment assets have a net value of \$16.6 billion. Some of these sites are over 100 years old; some were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's; and some were erected in the 1950's and 1960's as part of the "Mission 66" program. Faced with increasing visitation, an aging infrastructure and threats to natural and

cultural resources, our parks, public lands, and refuges face serious rehabilitation and repair needs.

Funding is urgently required to ensure safe visits for the visitors to the national parks, refuges, fish hatcheries, and public lands. It is also needed to make sure that 45,000 employees who daily work at BLM, FWS, NPS, and BIA facilities have safe work environments and that the 53,000 students that attend BIA schools have safe school environments.

To meet these needs, the 1999 Budget proposes the first year of a five year program to address critical health and safety needs in maintenance and construction, as well as for ongoing natural, cultural and resource protection.

The Department will target a significant amount of resources in 1998 and 1999 to begin to address these needs. This request for appropriated funds will be supplemented by significant new funding from recreation fees. In 1999, the NPS will be able to keep \$136.5 million in fee receipts, which is an increase of 250 percent over 1997. The Department will also aggressively seeks to leverage limited Federal funding.

The physical inventory of the 376 unit National Park System includes 16,000 permanent structures, 8,000 miles of roads, 1,500 bridges and tunnels, 5,000 housing units, approximately 1,500 water and wastewater systems, 200 radio systems, over 400 dams, and more than 200 solid waste operations.

The 512 units of the National Wildlife Refuge system include an infrastructure to support public use and wildlife management programs with over 1,000 buildings, 6,500 miles of roads, 2,700 miles of dikes, and thousands of water control structures.

The BLM maintains approximately 2,400 buildings, 500 administrative sites, 2,900 recreation sites, 62,000 miles of roads, 240 bridges, and 12,000 miles of trails to support the visiting public.

The BIA has 7,300 buildings containing 28 million square feet of space, including 2,280 education and associated buildings at 185 schools serving 53,000 students. BIA maintains 25,000 miles of roads.

The 1999 budget for maintenance and construction represents a total increase of \$68.0 million over the 1998 enacted level. For maintenance programs, it represents an increase of \$82.0 million, or eighteen percent over 1998, which will tackle the most pressing maintenance backlog needs. For construction programs, this represents a net decrease of \$14.0 million to better focus efforts the first year of the five year program. Construction funding will increase in the outyears.

For 1999, the Department proposes \$849 million to meet ongoing maintenance requirements and promote safe visits to public lands as described below:

The BLM proposal of \$56.6 million in construction and maintenance funding will allow it to address such problems as critical health and safety repairs at campgrounds, recreation sites, foot bridges, trails, and sewage systems.

As the first step of a five year program, the Department is developing uniform criteria and prioritized lists of critical health and safety and resource projects for 1999. The Department's goal is to fund the projects posing the greatest risks to the public and employees.

As the next step, the Department will begin to develop a five year plan to meet maintenance and resource needs to be used to formulate the 2000 budget request. Using an agreed upon definition the Department will refine its facility maintenance backlogs and begin scheduling and funding this backlog as appropriate over the next five years. This plan will require adequate funding for routine and cyclic maintenance on an annual basis and increases in outyear funding for this effort.

The \$83.6 million FWS proposal systematically meets prioritized backlogged projects identified through the Maintenance Management System. The \$46.6 million

in refuge system maintenance projects will include repair, rehabilitation and replacement needs and \$37.0 million in construction funding will include dam safety, bridge and road replacement, and ongoing natural resource projects on refuges and at hatcheries, such as Atlantic salmon propagation efforts at Maine's Craig Brook NFH.

The NPS request totals \$620.6 million and includes \$445.6 million for facilities maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation and \$175.0 million for construction projects. The Department and the NPS are working with the National Association for Public Administration to study and recommend improvements to the NPS

The following are selected annual performance goals from Interior Bureau performance plans that are supported by the Safe Visits to Public Lands Initiative:

BLM 1999 goal: In 1999, BLM will conduct scheduled maintenance activities on 1,200 recreation sites.

FWS 1999 goal: By September 30, 1999, FWS will reduce the current maintenance backlog by 31.9 percent. The current maintenance backlog, as catalogued at the start of the fiscal year in the Maintenance Management System consists of a list of deferred projects for facilities, structures and replacement of capitalized equipment.

NPS 1999 goal: By September 30, 1999, reduce the visitor safety incident rate by 6 percent from the NPS five-year (1992-1996) average.

	1998 Enacted	1999 Req.	2000 Est.	2001 Est.	2002 Est.	2003 Est.
Safe Visits to Public Lands (\$'s in millions)						
BLM maintenance	44	53	60	67	65	58
FWS maintenance	36	47	61	76	68	53
NPS maintenance	384	446	447	477	456	433
Total, Maintenance	464	546	568	620	589	544
BLM construction	3	4	5	6	6	4
FWS construction	45	37	43	48	45	38
NPS construction	215	175	214	252	228	188
BIA school construction	54	87	87	87	87	87
Total, Construction	317	303	349	393	366	317
Total	781	849	917	1,013	955	861

construction program.

Providing safe BIA schools will be the primary focus of an \$86.6 million education construction request. More specifically, \$37.4 million will replace existing and dilapidated schools at Pyramid Lake High School in Nevada, Sac and Fox Settlement School in Iowa, and Seba Dalkai Boarding School in Arizona; \$46.2 million will be used to make critical health and safety repairs at schools; and \$3.0 million will upgrade employee housing.

manifestations of our vigorous and expanding society — preempt irreplaceable lands of natural beauty and unique recreation value. In addition to the enhancement of spiritual, cultural and physical values resulting from the preservation of these resources, the expenditures for their preservation are a sound financial investment. Public acquisition costs can become multiplied and even prohibitive with the passage of time."

President John F. Kennedy

SUPPORT THE LWCF VISION

The first great conservation era began in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The first National Park — Yellowstone — was designated in 1872 while the first National Wildlife Refuge — Pelican Island — was established in 1903. In the first decades of the twentieth century, additional parks and refuges (and national forests) were carved out of the Public Domain, turned over to the Interior Department by the War Department (Civil War battlefields), or purchased through Migratory Bird Conservation Stamps, or Duck Stamps. The need to do more to conserve a portion of the Nation's natural and cultural resources and the concomitant problem of escalating land prices were foreseen by President John F. Kennedy in 1963 when he requested the legislation that was to establish the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):

"The growth of our cities, the development of our industry, the expansion of our transportation systems, all

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is based on a simple premise: some of the receipts from the sale of the Nation's nonrenewable resources should be set aside to protect a portion of the Nation's land resources for future generations. The receipts that flow into the Fund each year from Outer Continental Shelf minerals, motorboat fuel taxes, recreation fees, and surplus property sales are authorized to be appropriated to provide for recreation and resource protection.

President Clinton's proposal for a special earmark for LWCF in last year's Bipartisan Budget Agreement recognized the need to deal with new threats to some of our country's most treasured resources, as well as the need to accelerate the acquisition and protection of remaining sensitive lands. The President's proposal was agreed to by Congress in the 1998 Interior Appropriations Act, providing funding for two key acquisitions, the Headwaters Forest to protect old growth redwoods in California and the Crown Butte mine to protect Yellowstone National Park, as well as additional funding for other sensitive sites.

The Department requests \$213.6 million for land acquisition efforts for 1999, approximately the same level as the 1998 appropriated level without the special 1998 earmark. This funding is the first installment of a five-year program that will total \$1.5 billion for the Department. LWCF funding for the U.S. Forest Service will bring the Government's five year total to \$1.9 billion.

This five year plan continues the Administration's commitment to restore the Florida Everglades, and will also address explosive economic development and concurrent population growth in other areas of the country and the necessity to set aside future recreation, wildlife, and historic preserves for the future for the



children of today and tomorrow.

Everglades - The Everglades restoration proposal reflects the second year of the Vice President's four year, \$400 million initiative to accelerate Everglades restoration. The goal of restoring the Everglades watershed encompasses areas north of the Kissimmee River Basin all the way down through the Everglades National Park and into Florida Bay. Over the last 100 years, this vast region's natural water flow, southward from the headwaters of Kissimmee River to Lake Okeechobee, has been profoundly affected by

population growth. Seven of the ten fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country are located here; a huge tourism industry; and a large agricultural economy depend upon the sustainability of the ecosystem. The budget includes \$81.0 million in LWCF funding in the National Park Service to protect important habitat and improve water storage and quality by providing a protection buffer between natural and urban areas.

Other areas on which the Department's 1999 land acquisition program will focus include:

Northern Forest - Some 26 million acres of Northern Forest stretch westward from coastal Maine through New Hampshire, Vermont and upstate New York. Within easy driving distance of major urban centers including Boston, Hartford, and New York City, these wildlands offer tremendous outdoor recreation opportunities to millions of city dwellers, as well as home for black bears, deer, eagles, and stopover rest areas for migratory birds. Tracts which have been held by large landowners — mostly timber companies — are beginning to come on the market. Featured FWS projects include expanding segments of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge along the upper Connecticut River Valley and its uplands and protecting additional wetlands, forested swamplands and upland areas at New Hampshire's Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge in the headwaters of the Androscoggin River.

The Mississippi Delta provides unparalleled opportunities for wildlife protection, recreation, tourism, and commercial use of its natural resources. The featured Park Service project, Jean LaFitte National Historic Park and Preserve, includes four units which interpret Acadian culture and history; provide hiking and canoeing opportunities; commemorate the 1815 Battle for New Orleans; and interpret the diverse ethnic population of the Delta. Existing National Wildlife Refuges range from the tip of the Delta which is an important wintering sanctuary for lesser snow geese and eighteen species of ducks to the largest remaining

Land & Water Conservation Fund (\$'s in millions)	1999 Req.	2000 Est.	2001 Est.	2002 Est.	2003 Est.	Total Five Yrs
BLM projects	15.0	15.0	18.0	22.0	22.0	92.0
FWS projects	60.5	97.0	116.0	138.0	137.0	548.5
NPS projects	138.1	183.0	199.0	152.0	154.0	825.5
Total funding	213.6	295.0	333.0	312.0	313.0	1,466.0

bottomland forests in the northern Delta of the Mississippi to the upper delta with its thousand year old cypress trees, tupelo swamps, and important habitat for waterfowl, songbirds, turkey and bobcat. Featured FWS projects for 1999 include Louisiana's Black Bear NWR and Mississippi's Bogue Chitto NWR.

Southern California provides extraordinarily diverse recreational, scenic, and natural area experiences for over 30 million people within the Los Angeles, San Diego and Palm Springs

The following are selected annual performance goals from Interior Bureau performance plans that are supported by the Land and Water Conservation Fund initiative:

Everglades goal: In 1999, Federal agencies participating in the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force will acquire and/or extend offers on approximately 29,000 acres of land in the South Florida ecosystem.

Everglades goal: In 1999, the State of Florida will acquire and/or extend offers on approximately 33,000 acres of land in the South Florida ecosystem with funding provided through the Department of the Interior.

BLM 1999 goal: In 1999, BLM will complete 20 percent of its 5 year priority acquisitions. The land acquisition initiative includes an additional \$3.8 million for priority acquisitions. The funds will allow the purchase of approximately 2,500 acres of land.

Potential BLM projects near these fast growing urban centers include the Santa Rosa Mountains National Scenic Area for enhanced recreational opportunities and the Otay Mountain/Kuchamaa project to protect critical habitat for coastal sage scrub and the California gnatcatcher. In addition to these projects, the Department will focus on projects in the California Desert. The California Desert Protection Act designated sixty nine new wilderness areas totalling 3.7 million acres — including some 300,000 acres of inholdings.